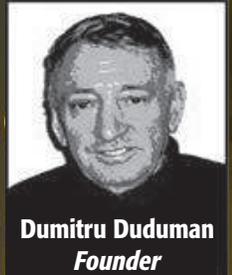


Hand of **HELP**

From Trials to Testimonies



March - May 2020



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From Trials to Testimonies

It has already been five months since my trip to Ukraine, yet the testimonies of the people on the frontlines of Ukraine's war ring louder than ever. As the world is sent into a downward spiral and destabilized, it is vital that the children of God remain rooted in the promises found in His Word and encouraged by the testimonies of God's protection regardless of how grim the circumstances.

God has granted us all a season of introspection. A time when we are to ask God to search our hearts and evaluate where we have placed our trust. Have we placed our trust in our 401K, our ability to run a business, our stock investments, our readily available healthcare system, our government, or has it been in the only true constant of this life, our Father and His Word?



Psalm 91: 1-2, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust."

Matthew 6:26, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"

Jeremiah 17:7-8, "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit."

Now more than ever, we need to look to the Word for our nourishment and lifeline.

It is in this time of stress-testing that we have an opportunity to show the world that our faith and trust lie in the Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient God of the Universe. The uncreated Creator of all things!



Let's not waste our lockdown or quarantine! As new viruses take over modern society, swarms of locusts rise to destroy crops, and toxic fumes billow from the nuclear site at Chernobyl, let us learn our lessons swiftly so that we might represent our Savior well, before a world that is without hope.

Amid our greatest trials, God is raising up some even greater testimonies.

Our guide to Eastern Ukraine, brother Toader, was on his 46th trip to the region. He shared of a specific journey where he had taken his youth team to Sloviansk to fix the

roofs of those who were mercilessly bombed by the invading troops.

“While we were working on the home of an elderly woman, a young man named Leonia, who was there to help me with the labor, stood out. Every day he was wearing long sleeve overalls and heavy-duty thick rubber waders in the blistering summer heat. I told him, ‘You need to change...it is not normal to be wearing this type of clothing in August.’ With tears in his eyes, he said that ‘These are the only things I have left.’ He then pointed to where his house once stood.”

He shared that they lived in their root cellar for three days during the bombings. Leonia ventured out only once to get water for his wife and three children, but even then, snipers that were mocking him shot his bucket so that it could not hold water. Once they ran out of food, they were forced out of hiding and went to Leonia's mother-in-law to have a meal. It was while they were there for a couple of hours that their house was bombed and leveled. Their entire life savings, their home, the

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root cellar that had once provided a hiding place were all gone, no more than a pile of ashes.

This testimony is not one of dismay or distress, but a message of God’s love and providence.

Brother Leonia said, “I thank God for this war. Had it not taken place, I would’ve never had the opportunity to hear the message of the Gospel. The local church showed us love in our darkest hour, showed us the love of Christ.”

As we gain a deeper understanding that God uses everything for His Glory, why not sit down tonight

and write out your testimony, possibly starting with the following:

I thank God for COVID-19, because....

Thanking God for today, while praying for a better tomorrow,
Daniel Boldea



God's People in Krasnogorlovka

The local church in Krasnogorlovka has been a place of refuge where you can get a hot meal ever since the beginning of the war. This is one of the hardest-hit locations that we visited. Our guide shared about the time he spent repairing the roof of the church building where this evangelical community dinner was being held. While staying overnight with the youth group from his church (over a 20-hour drive away), the sky lit up with some of the heaviest bombings they had ever witnessed.

Even earlier in the day when we visited, years later from when the war had started, shots rang through the otherwise eerily quiet night.

The church, until recently, had served as the only source of potable water in the city. A congregation of only six members fed a few hundred locals, soldiers, and missionaries at a time. They continue their work to this day by hosting dinners with the locals from within their community. We met with them for one such meal and had a wonderful time of sharing the Word through preaching and praise.

That church of only 6 members saw as many as 270 in attendance during the war, and they now have 80 members as they continue to evangelize in the community.



They have prayer daily and church services on Sundays and Wednesdays. During the early morning prayer meetings, the elderly ladies cry out and thank God that their house is still standing and pray that the Holy Spirit would pierce the hardened hearts of the people through the Gospel.

Pastor Radislav shared that the building from where he now leads the congregation was once the local courthouse from where believers were sentenced to prison. They work with former drug addicts, ex-convicts, and the

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many children of the community. The church has a dedicated group of volunteers that do the cooking for the locals and are eager to do more for the furthering of the Gospel in their community.

One of the projects pastor Radislav was praying for was being able to purchase a few cows that could be tended to by the church volunteers. The dairy produced would not only be used directly for the evangelical community meals, but any surplus would be sold and



church projects financed, thus making their long term outreach self-sustainable.

Please keep our outreach to Ukraine in your prayers!
Daniel Boldea



In Loving Memory

In lieu of a Child of the Month, we would like to share the following regarding our dear Dumitru. Thank you for your support in prayer and financial giving!

On April 4th, 2020, 11:10 pm, eternity stretched forth its arms, and the voice of the everlasting Father softly whispered, "Come home." Our beloved Dumitru finished his earthly race. In the quietness of the night, surrounded by the people dearest to him at the orphanage, Dumitru was taken home to meet His Savior.

God gave us the privilege of being his guides on this earth through the short years of his life. The fourteen years he was with us passed like a day. Dumitru grew up before our eyes to become a fine young man. It was, however, his spiritual growth that caught everyone by surprise. It was in one concise year from the moment he said, "Yes, I will follow You!" and got baptized, to the moment he drew his final breath, and in perfect peace accepted God's will, that he had matured more than he had the twenty years prior.

If in 2019, at the onset of his illness, he would ask "Why me, why me?", God, in His grace, changed his whole perspective and led him to proclaim with an unwavering belief, "May the Lord do just as He pleases with this clay, I am glad I have peace in my heart" or quote the Philippians verse that became his motto "To live is Christ, to die is gain."

Such a transformation! Dumitru grew more in a year than others are capable of doing in a lifetime!

Most often, his heartbreaking cry was not caused by the immense pain in his body, rapidly destroyed as each day his cancer progressed; no, his cry was for his brothers, both biological ones and those at the orphanage. His deepest prayer was that all of them would call upon the Name of the Lord!

Oh, if only we could all look the imminent end of our lives in the eye, and let no fear or tremble creep into our hearts! If only we would all have the peace and determination Dumitru had! He worked until the very last moment of his life for his Lord! And the crown that

awaits him will bear the name of all those whom the Lord has won for Him through his unwavering fight!

Dumitru might be absent from the body, but he is alive; he will forever be alive because he believed in our Savior, Jesus Christ.



The day of our future reunion is so much more beautiful, knowing we will be united again. Until then, we say see you soon to our dear child, Dumitru! God entrusted us with raising him, and now we give him back to the Lord at the tender age of 21. We thank God for allowing him to work and sow the seed of His Word in the hearts of so many children and adults around him. All things are for His glory! Let us all work while it is still day, for the time is near, and our race will soon end! May we all be prepared to face our Lord, our Father, our Judge!

The Hand of Help Family

On the day of his funeral, the children of the orphanage gathered together to do what Dumitru taught them to do in all life's circumstances, praise Jesus.



Orphanage Quarantine Troopers



The Persistent One Madarjac and Beyond

During this unprecedented time of quarantines, lockdowns, military ordinances, and travel restrictions, in Romania, there is one brother that we can't seem to stop or slow down in his outreach ministry. Daniel Iacob, a father



see the Gospel transform the lives of these communities!

of three, cannot sit still and wait this virus out, knowing that there are so many going without in the villages of Madarjac, Bojila, Frumusica, and everywhere in between. He immediately pursued the local authorities to

Thank you to all those who gave for the projects featured in the September-October Newsletter. We were able to purchase a stove for everyone that needed one, as well as provide firewood, emergency food packages,

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be granted special leniency so that he could continue to serve the lowly.

While taking all preventative measures seriously, Daniel set out to continue the Lord's work in the lives of the poor living in these desolate villages. He is more driven than ever to



and complete some small renovation projects – mostly insulating mud-straw homes.



Through the dedication of those on the frontlines, our work continues. As the season has changed, we are now able to begin purchasing livestock, start building projects for those whose homes are set to collapse, and most importantly, continue reaching the lost with the message of the Gospel.

As always, your prayers and support are much appreciated.



Let us continue to pray that many would come to know Jesus through the work of missionaries around the world, and through Hand of Help, and yes, special protection for the persistent ones.

Hand of Help Staff



Dear Brethren

Dear Brethren,

Psalm 112:1, “Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who delights greatly in His commandments.”

Psalm 112:6-7, “Surely he will never be shaken; the righteous will be in everlasting remembrance. He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.”

If the last forty-five years have taught me anything, it is that life can change in an instant. It hasn't only happened once or a handful of times, but looking back, I can pinpoint countless moments when life made a heel turn, and every plan I had for the foreseeable future got decimated. I've learned to expect the unexpected, so much so, that whenever something new comes along, that throws a wrench into the works, I take a deep breath, remind myself that God is on the throne and in control, and press on. We can either be paralyzed by the new paradigm, give into fear and panic, or analyze, improvise, adapt, and overcome.

It's not as though we as children of God were ignorant of the fact that change was coming upon the earth. It's not as though we went about our lives, believing it would be smooth sailing until Jesus appeared in the clouds. We knew dark days would visit the earth, and although some are already trumpeting the notion that this is the end, I dare say what we are seeing is merely the beginning of the beginning of the end.

If this has caused your heart to be troubled, if this has allowed fear to worm its way in and steal your peace, what is yet to come upon the earth will likely shake you to your very core. God warns His children of what the future holds, yes, even the ugly, chaotic, tumultuous bits, for the explicit purpose of not being afraid. When you see something coming or live with the expectation of it, you brace yourself and prepare the best way you know how so that when what you were expecting finally materializes, it lessens the impact.

It's one thing to know a punch to the face is coming; it's another to get sucker-punched out of thin air. When you know it's coming, you grit your teeth, you close your eyes, you hold your breath, and absorb the blow differently. I'm not saying both don't hurt. The pain will be there whether you see it coming or not, but you recover much faster when you know it's coming. When you see it coming, there is no what just happened fog.

This will pass, as such things always do, worse will come, they too will pass only to be replaced by something different. It is the way of life, an undeniable reality of the times we are living in. What we cannot do is fail to learn and grow our trust in God through such experiences.

Throughout this entire ordeal, there are two lessons with which I've been reacquainted. Simultaneously simple and profound, these are lessons I hadn't forgotten, but that had been dulled over time. The first lesson was that what we miss the most is what we took for granted the most, therefore we should nevermore take anything for granted.

From something as simple as going out for breakfast once a week with the girls to being able to attend church service and sit in a comfy pew, these things were so prevalent in our life that they were taken for granted. We assumed they would always be available to us, permanent and immutable. Yet, within days we're watching church services over the internet, and the only places you can go to that are still open are the gas station and the grocery store.

The second lesson I was reacquainted with was that if you walk with God during the good times, He will be there in the bad. You won't have to go searching for Him when everything is falling apart; He will be there holding your hand, because you are on a journey together, and He will be with you every step of the way until you reach your destination.

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Recent events have proven that everything of this earth is impermanent. Everything of this earth can be shaken. Save for God, whatever men have placed their faith in has failed them, and very soon, there will be a glut of souls looking for hope. There may never be a better opportunity to point the way to Christ and the cross. There may never be a better opportunity to shine bright the light of love and hope and peace and joy so that those in the darkness might be drawn to it.

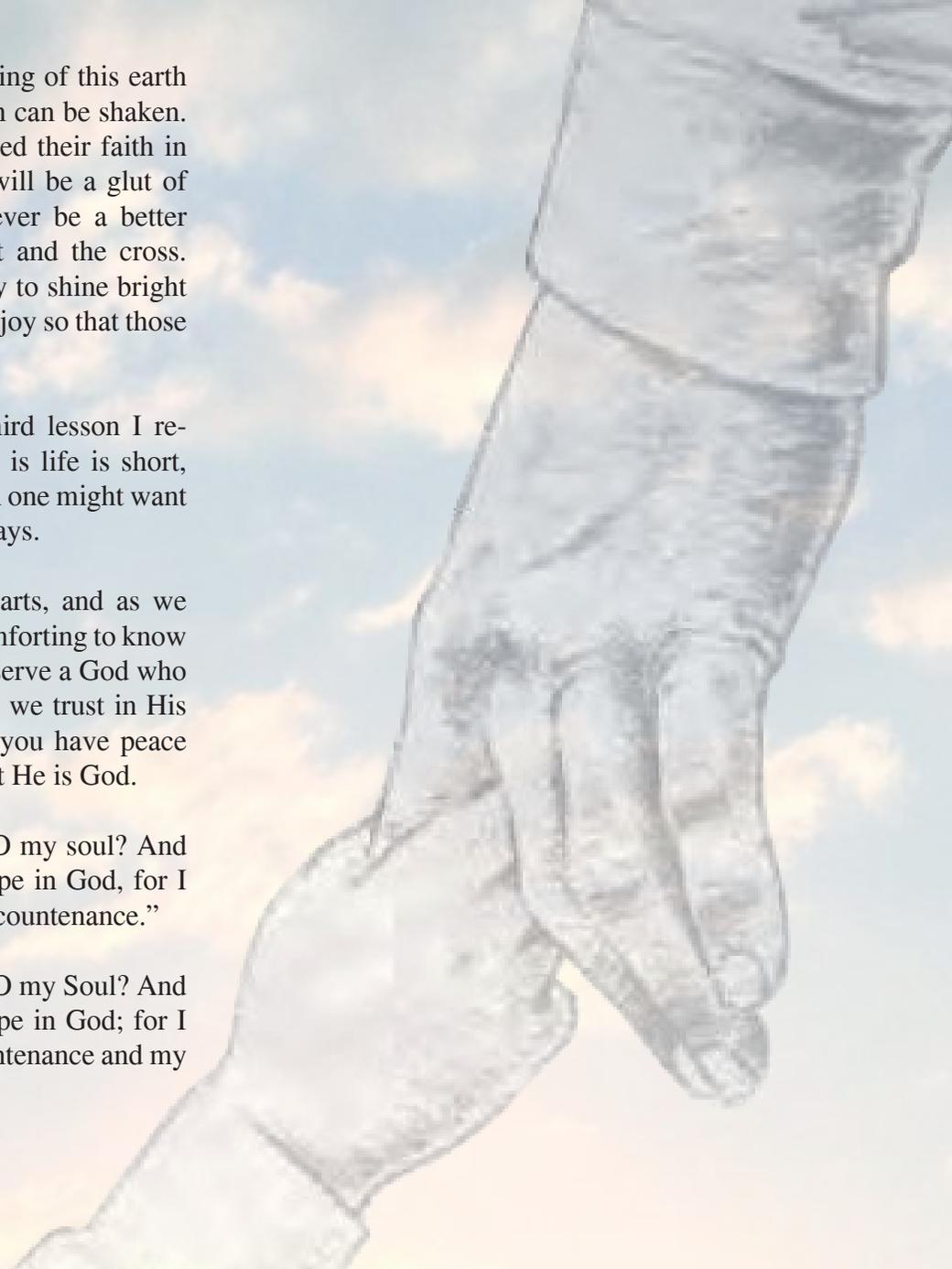
Now that I think about it, there's a third lesson I re-learned these past few weeks, and that is life is short, time is fleeting, and no matter how much one might want to, you will never get back your yesterdays.

You are in our prayers and on our hearts, and as we navigate these uncharted waters, it is comforting to know that you are praying for us as well. We serve a God who knows the end from the beginning, and we trust in His mighty arm to guide us through. May you have peace and joy abundant, be still, and know that He is God.

Psalm 42:5, "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."

Psalm 42:11, "Why are you cast down, O my Soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, the help of my countenance and my God."

With love in Christ,
Michael Boldea, Jr.



Please pray for the health and safety of our children and orphanage staff. Due to newly imposed COVID-19 regulations, the staff tending to the children is having to work in two-week shifts (being present both day and night), unable to go home, and see their own families.

Please pray that all the needs of our projects be met even amid this economic uncertainty.